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PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE EPIDEMIC INFLUENZA,
AS IT APPEARED IN CHELTENHAM, ENG., IN THE BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT YEAR.
BY JAMES M'CABE, M.D., OF CHELTENHAM.

"Difficile est communia bene dicere."—HORACE.

THE observation of the poet, which I have placed at the head of this paper, applies well to the disease of which I am here about to attempt a description. The epidemic influenza which has so recently extended itself throughout the greater part of Europe, having presented, on its first appearance, the symptoms merely of an ordinary cold, it is, perhaps, the more difficult to convey, in terms sufficiently definite, the essential and characteristic distinction, or difference, between an ordinary cold or catarrh, with its accompanying fever, and the late formidable, and too frequently fatal, epidemic.

To this similarity of symptoms, at the beginning of the attack, may, in a great degree, be attributed whatever mortality was occasioned by the influenza. Elderly persons, who, for years, had been accustomed in the winter season to catarrhal affections, disregarded its first attack, and merely had recourse to their accustomed remedies. The remedies used were frequently stimulant, and the public press too generally lent the sanction of pretended authority, and the contagious stimulus of publicity, to the recommendation of dangerous specifics. A teaspoonful of sweet spirits of nitre, and the same quantity of paregoric elixir, was one of these dangerous specifics, ostentatiously paraded in the public papers as an infallible remedy for the cure of the prevailing epidemic; and the physician, when at length consulted, at, perhaps, an advanced stage of the disease, frequently found that such a dose had been taken night after night, until, at length, the inflammation of the lining membrane of the air cells of the lungs, which at first had been, probably, merely catarrhal, increased by this strong stimulant and opiate, had terminated in chronic bronchitis, threatening immediate suffocation, from the effusion of phlegm and mucus, and often of a muco-purulent fluid into the bronchial ramifications.

Another symptom which, in elderly persons, frequently masked the real disease, was lumbago; shooting pains about the back and loins generally accompanied the first accession of the epidemic, and persons who had long been accustomed to such pains, could not be induced to believe that they were different from those of ordinary lumbago. The

only fatal case which happened in my own practice, occurred in this way. A lady, nearly eighty years of age, who had narrowly escaped from the epidemic influenza of 1833, was attacked with pains and stitches about the lumbar region during the prevalence of the late epidemic. Happening to call upon her, I found her ill in bed, with what I foresaw would be a dangerous attack of the influenza, and having brought her, with great difficulty, through the epidemic of 1833, I apprised her of the necessity of having immediate recourse to remedies. This advice she refused to comply with, asserting her conviction that it was not the influenza, but lumbago, with which she was attacked, and stating that she had already applied a belladonna plaster to her back, which, in such attacks, she had always found an infallible remedy. I heard no more of her for the following six or seven days, when I was summoned to attend her; but it was now too late. The lungs were engorged with a muco-purulent matter, which impeded the circulation and respiration, and which she had not the power to expectorate. The distressing rôle increased, the sensorium became affected, and she died on the fourth day after I had been called into attendance, and, probably, the eleventh or twelfth from the first attack of the epidemic.

A circumstance of some practical importance attended this case, with which the patient made me acquainted a day or two before its fatal termination. During her attack of influenza, in the epidemic of 1833, the expectoration was most profuse, and became of a muco-purulent nature towards the termination of the disease; after the accompanying fever had entirely ceased, the same sort of discharge took place from the mucous membrane of the intestines. Finding her greatly weakened by, and in danger of sinking under, these discharges, I ordered her port-wine negus. This remedy acted most beneficially, almost instantaneously checking the expectoration and intestinal discharges. Recollecting this circumstance, the patient told me that she had of herself tried the same remedy, almost at the beginning of her late and fatal attack, but that, instead of deriving any benefit from it, her fever had been greatly increased, and her breathing rendered still more difficult. This circumstance shows the impropriety of having recourse to stimulating remedies in the early stages of the influenza, and the injurious effects that may probably have resulted to the public by the prescriptions recommended through the public press; for a small quantity of warm port-wine negus is by no means so powerful or so dangerous a stimulant as paregoric elixir and nitrous ether in the early stages of bronchial inflammation.

The first manifestation of an attack of the epidemic influenza was seen in its effects on the pulmonary apparatus, and the cavities about the face and fauces which are ordinarily affected by catarrhal discharges. A fever of a very peculiar nature generally accompanied this attack. The peculiarity of the fever consisted in a nervous restlessness and watchfulness, which accompanied its first accession, together with an anxiety and apprehension which in general appeared to exceed the importance or apparent danger of the attack. The discharge from the mucous membrane of the nose, and cavities about the face and fauces,

was different from the thin catarrhal discharges which ordinarily accompany a common cold; it was thick, yellow, and, in some instances, white, as if the albuminous part of the blood was secreted from the mucous surfaces, lining the cavities about the face; and the same kind of secretion, extending into the bronchial ramifications of the lungs, gave to the expectoration, which, in most instances, was profuse, the appearance of a muco-purulent discharge, particularly in the mornings, when thickened and condensed by having remained for some time in the bronchial ramifications.

With regard to the description of persons most liable to the influenza, it appeared to attack all indiscriminately; the very young and the very old, and such as were otherwise infirm, as might be expected, suffered the most severely. It was among such only, in Cheltenham at least, that any fatal cases occurred. The disease generally attacked all the members of a family, either simultaneously or in rapid succession. This circumstance led many to the opinion, that the influenza was propagated by personal contagion. But the rapidity with which it attacked not only the population of towns, but the whole community, is scarcely reconcilable with that opinion. Various statistical circumstances, in towns and districts of country, may hasten or retard the development of a disease arising from atmospheric causes, so that some appearance of succession may be observed in its progress in different localities, and various degrees of susceptibility to the impressions of the disease may exist in different individuals, which may occasion a succession in its attacks even in the same locality. The general characteristics, however, of an epidemic, that is, of a disease which seizes at once, or nearly so, upon whole communities, seemed rather to belong to the influenza, than those of a disease arising from personal contagion, and afterwards spreading by the slow and successive progress of contagious propagation.

With respect to the treatment of the influenza, it varied, of course, according to the circumstances attending each individual case; such as the habit of body and previous state of health of the party attacked; the periods at which the physician was first called in, and the functional or organic derangements with which the affection of the chest might have been complicated. In most cases the affection of the chest was complicated, either at its commencement, or during its progress, with derangement of the biliary system; and some cases were accompanied by actual jaundice, attended with excruciating pain in the region of the gall bladder, leading to the suspicion of the presence of gall stones. In such complications, small doses of calomel and James's powder, with warm baths or fomentations to the region of the liver, together with mild aperients, were found to be most successful remedies.

The fever which accompanied the influenza seldom required general bloodletting; but the difficulty of breathing often required local depletion, by the application of leeches to the chest. I was called, much about the same time, to two ladies who were attacked by the epidemic; they were both of full habits of body, and both in the prime of life. In both cases there was great difficulty of breathing, and high fever. In one of these cases I immediately directed the application of a dozen

leeches to the chest, besides giving, internally, James's powder and the extract of hyosciamus, with nitrous and mucilaginous drinks. As the other lady happened to be then very near the period of her accouchment, I hesitated about ordering the leeches, and at first confined the treatment to general remedies. On visiting both patients next morning, I found so great an improvement in the case in which the leeches had been applied, and found that the other patient had passed so restless a night, that I immediately directed the leeches to be applied, which, in this case, also, produced immediate relief; and in both were followed by a speedy and perfect recovery.

In the case of an infant, also, about six months old, to which I was called in consultation, the application of a few leeches was attended with the greatest benefit; indeed there was every reason to believe that the life of the little patient was saved by that remedy. When I was first called in to see the child, it was black in the face and gasping for breath, the power of respiration, and also of deglutition, being almost entirely suspended: and such was the state of prostration to which it was reduced that I had some difficulty in persuading the medical attendant to try the effect of leeches, lest the child should expire during their application. By stating, however, my opinion strongly that nothing else but taking away blood from the engorged vessels about the throat, by the application of leeches, afforded the slightest chance of recovery, it was agreed to, and two leeches were applied immediately, one on each side of the trachea; the laborious heavings and efforts which accompanied the respiration, occasioned the leeches to bleed profusely; the little patient was quickly relieved; it subsequently recovered, and is now a healthy child.

The fever and bronchial inflammation, or irritation accompanying the influenza, having been reduced by leeches, mild aperients, James's powder, and nitrous and mucilaginous drinks, some diffusible stimuli became useful, and, perhaps, necessary; for in cases in which the patient had been kept long on the antiphlogistic plan of treatment, the disease sometimes put on a typhoid character. At this stage of the influenza the following mixture was found highly beneficial: R. Almond and camphor mixture, of each three ounces; tincture of hyosciamus, and spirit of nitrous ether, of each one drachm; Battley's sedative opium, twenty drops; syrup of balsam of Tol., half a drachm. Two large spoonfuls three or four times a day.

The above mixture generally afforded sufficient stimulation to obviate the typhus tendency, and, at the same time, relieved the distressing cough which, at this stage of the disease, often harassed the patient. Light broths might now be allowed, and where care was taken to prevent a relapse, the patients in general rapidly recovered.

In conclusion, the influenza of 1837 could not, abstractedly, be considered a very formidable disease, and patients, generally speaking, recovered from the severer symptoms in a very short time; relapses, however, were frequent, and when we consider how extensively the epidemic prevailed throughout the country, there is reason to fear that,

as one of its many and complicated consequences, it has entailed upon the community an increased disposition to pulmonary diseases.

VERMINOUS IRRITATION AS SIMULATING OTHER DISEASES.

BY WM. MARKLEY LEE, M.D., OF INDIANTOWN, S. C.

INTESTINAL worms are often improperly supposed to excite fever in the human subject; for every experienced physician can recall instances in which worms have been discharged, and in which the friends of the patient have in consequence ascribed the febrile symptoms to verminous irritation, whereas their discharge was rather a consequence, than a cause of fever.

I have often been astonished, however, that so few instances have been recorded in medical periodicals, of worms as causing the symptoms of other diseases. They may, and I am convinced frequently do, irritate certain nerves, and produce symptoms which are never attributed to their influence. To demonstrate this position, I will describe certain cases which have occurred in my own practice, to all appearances totally disconnected with worms, but which were promptly cured by anthelmintics.

Sciatica.—Soon after I commenced the practice of my profession in Charleston, I was requested to attend a lad about nine years of age, laboring under sciatica. Blistering and the remedies usually employed, were tried in vain for several days. At one of my visits, when at a loss what next to prescribe, his mother informed me that he ground his teeth frequently in his sleep; this led me to suspect verminous irritation; I therefore sent him anthelmintic medicine, composed of calomel and spigelia, and at my next visit I was truly gratified to see him walking about the house, free from all pain except the irritation of the blister. I was informed, that immediately after he had discharged a number of lumbrici, the rheumatic symptoms vanished. He was from that time restored to perfect health.

Phthisis Pulmonalis.—I was soon after requested to visit a young married woman, whose case was marked by symptoms of the above disease—cough so incessant as to prevent sleep, and was exhausting her strength; remedies usually exhibited in such cases, here failed to afford relief, until one day she mentioned some symptoms which led me to suspect verminous irritation. After the exhibition of the anthelmintic already mentioned, in the space of forty hours she discharged an equal number of lumbrici, and the symptoms of pulmonary disease were relieved promptly and permanently.

Paraplegia.—I was called during the last summer to a young girl about eleven years of age, sick with bilious remittent fever; she had been bled and purged without material benefit; the febrile excitement was moderate, but in addition to considerable pain and soreness about the præcordia, there was a remarkable loss of power over the lower extremities, amounting even to inability to turn in bed without assistance.

A careful examination of the spinal column presented no symptom of local inflammation. In reply to my interrogatories, I was assured that she had received no blow, or injury of the spine, but that the symptoms of paraplegia supervened at the same time with the fever. Her friends united in stating that she frequently ground her teeth during sleep. A blister to the epigastrium was directed; and as I had never seen nor read of a similar case from verminous irritation, my treatment was adapted both to fever and worms: R. Nit. potass. ʒi.; cal., ipecac. and camphor, āā ʒss. M. Of this compound, a frequent prescription of mine, in bilious remittent, I directed eight grains every three hours during the paroxysm, and that ʒss. calomel be combined with the first dose. I was in hopes, from the well-established efficacy of this preparation of mercury, and the success which is reported to attend the exhibition of camphor in Italian practice, that if this form of paraplegia was caused by worms, relief would be promptly obtained. A dose of ol. ricini and sp. terebinthinæ was also directed to be administered the succeeding morning. At my next visit I ascertained that she had discharged a large number of worms, and was enabled to walk about. She soon recovered.

Such facts I consider interesting and important, and have been astonished that they have excited so little attention from the profession. Have I erred in attributing these cases to verminous irritation? In the two former, the treatment usually instituted had failed to produce the results expected, and it was not until worms had been evacuated, that relief was obtained.

I trust this hasty article may elicit the experience of my medical brethren on this point.

In conclusion, I will describe a case which came under my care while assistant physician of the (Charleston) Dispensary, in 1828. I was called to an elderly woman who for several years had been troubled with tænia; several eminent physicians, in succession, had dislodged a portion of the worm; but in the course of a few months medical aid was again required—for as the head of the tænia had not been discharged, new joints had been regenerated and morbid symptoms renewed—the exhibition of calomel and gamboge, followed by ol. ricini and sp. terebinth. in a few hours caused the discharge of a tænia about four feet in length. Attributing the recurrence of the disease to an atony of the alimentary canal, after the exhibition of alkalies for the purpose of removing the tenacious mucus from the mouths of the absorbents, I prescribed the solution of the acet. of iron, formed by digesting the carbonate of iron in strong vinegar, to be taken in doses of a teaspoonful thrice a day. But a short time was necessary to demonstrate its efficacy, for her health improved rapidly. By my directions, she persisted in the use of the remedy for several weeks. After all former attacks, a year had never elapsed without a renewal of the symptoms. Fully three years after, I again saw her, when she stated that she had never since perceived any symptoms of the worm.

A few months since, I attended a young negro, from whom, in the space of a week, I succeeded in dislodging more than seventy lumbrici.

The same tonic (acet. iron) was prescribed for him ; and at the present time, his master has not a more healthy young negro.

These latter cases, although not strictly connected with the above article, are adduced to show the expediency and necessity of following up the exhibition of anthelmintics by chalybeates, or other tonics.—*Southern Med. Jour.*

OPIUM IN RHEUMATISM—FURTHER EVIDENCE.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—For some months past, opium, as a remedy in rheumatism, has frequently been referred to and commented upon, in your valuable periodical. Too much has already been said about it, if it is not a remedy ; and if it is, it will not be a misemployment of time to say more. Having myself, in two previous communications, spoken favorably of it, I shall still speak of it as a useful medicine in this disorder.

I was induced to make these remarks, from having seen, in your paper, the observations of a writer who signs himself A. H., of Cheraw, S. C. He states that opium as a remedy has long been known to him, but expresses a doubt whether it is a real remedy, or calculated to produce a radical cure, and asks the question, I should think sarcastically, whether it will cure a case of fifteen years' standing ?

In regard to this question, I will reply by asking him whether any disorder of fifteen years' standing is often totally and radically cured ? It is well known that the longer the human system has been subjected to disease, the harder it is to counteract the morbid tendency, until disease has so interwoven itself with all its actions that it becomes constitutional, and it is impossible to restore it to a healthy state. It would be as easy to restore life to the dead or decaying limb of a tree, as health to a person who has been sick such a length of time. I should almost as soon think of restoring a leg or an arm, when either of these had been amputated, as effecting a cure when a person had been laboring under disease for fifteen years. Quacks and bragadocios may pretend to do it, but a physician who wishes to establish a reputation upon something more than mere pretence, would detest the idea of so base a fraud.

Respecting opium as a remedy in other, or recent cases, it is like all other generally attested remedies. Under favorable circumstances it will cure, and under unfavorable ones it will be likely to fail. Like other remedies, too, it requires the assistance of medicine possessed of other attributes. We have but few specifics, or medicines, which will always cure ; and we have but few single remedies that will effect much without the aid of collateral means. In cases where there is a high inflammatory diathesis, venesection is necessary. When the stomach and bowels are in an improper condition, these should be operated upon. When the secerning system is in fault, this should be looked to with the most scrupulous attention. It is not one set of vessels alone,

or a single viscus, that requires the care of the physician, but everything belonging to the human frame. Though opium may sometimes do good without being conjoined with something else, yet its judicious combination with some other medicine is what renders it so useful, not only in rheumatism, but in many other disorders. To give opium alone, is like taking a dead lift at a heavy body. To give it united with its appropriate adjuncts, is like adding the lever or windlass to what is too heavy to lift by main strength. There is a variety of diaphoretic and nauseating medicines which should be made use of when opium is to be resorted to. Cathartics, judiciously selected, are oftentimes required. When due attention to what is here suggested, is observed, opium is a most desirable and valuable medicine in rheumatism, or there is a most palpable fallacy in appearances, and the physician can assure himself of the beneficial effect of no remedy. There is no fallacy, however, in regard to this. Opium is designed to do, and when properly administered does, something more than "*deaden pain*." Were this its only effect, it ought not to be *despised* in so distressing a disorder. But it does something besides this, not only in rheumatism, but in a long list of disorders that could be mentioned; and were the world to be deprived of it, I know of nothing to supply its place, and the healing art would be scarcely worth the name.

SAMUEL FISH.

Boston, Dec. 14, 1837.

INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE ON PHTHISIS.

SUMMARY OF A REPORT MADE TO THE FRENCH ACADEMY OF MEDICINE IN REFERENCE TO THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE UPON PHTHISIS.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

SOME time during the year 1836, a physician proposed to the French Minister of Commerce, to establish at Algiers a public establishment for the reception of phthisical patients. The Minister consulted the Royal Academy of Medicine, and in consequence of this application a committee was appointed. A report was made by M. Louis, as chairman, in opposition to the plan, and for this reason, viz., that there is no *proof* at present that Algiers has a climate more favorable for phthisical patients than any other portion of the world possesses. There is need of statistical data, and in order to gain them, M. Louis proposed the appointment of another committee, whose duty it should be to inform foreign physicians in correspondence with the Academy, of its views in regard to the importance of collecting such data, and to propose to them some general mode of investigation in case they should be willing to send to the Academy any of the results of their observation. This committee's report was accepted Jan. 17, 1837. The following is a summary of it.

The Academy expresses regret that so little is known in reference to the effect of climate upon phthisis. This question can be decided only by data from all quarters of the globe. The Academy, therefore, appeals to physicians of every nation to send to it any facts they may ob-

tain, promising that the honor of collecting such facts shall rest with their authors.

The report then enters into detail as to the mode of procedure. The Academy wishes its correspondents to observe, 1st, the meaning of phthisis. "It is that disease which, with a very few exceptions, causes death by all the degrees of marasmus, and is characterized anatomically by tumors in the parenchyma of the lungs, generally rounded, of a yellow color, homogeneous, dull aspect, firm, difficult to crush at first, softening after a space of time, and causing cavities." Not merely the lungs, but all the other organs are to be examined carefully. The importance of fixing exactly the time of commencement of the disease, by *repeated questions*, is urged. Three tables are proposed, in order to have some uniformity in the returns to the Academy.

PHTHISIS.		TABLE I.*				ANATOMY.			
No.	Age.	Sex.	Temperament.	Form of Body.	Lungs.	Epiglottis.	Larynx.	Trachea.	Esophagus.
									Small Intestine.
									Liver.

PHTHISIS.		TABLE II.				SYMPTOMS.			
No.	Age.	Sex.	Temperament.	Form of Body.	Profession.	Food.	Excesses of any kind.	Time of Commencement.	First Symptoms
									Symptoms at Time of Examination.
									Course of Disease.
									Curative Means
									Lungs.
									Epiglottis.
									Larynx.
									Trachea.
									Esophagus.
									Small Intestine.
									Liver.

TABLE III.		CLIMATE.			
Longitude.	Latitude.	Mountains.	Forests.	Soil.	Rivers.
					Rains.
					Moisture.
					Mean Temperature.
					Habitation.
					Wines.
					Sudden Changes of Temperature.

* It will be seen that all these tables are insufficient for the report of every detail of importance. I presume they are intended merely as models, and that other diseases may be added if necessary.

Is not this subject of sufficient importance to be attended to by the physicians of our country? There are very many hospitals in which great opportunities are afforded of studying disease. Will none of the physicians in attendance upon these institutions respond to the call?

Boston, Dec., 1837.

H. I. B.

NEW EXPERIMENTS ON THE SENSE OF TASTE IN MAN.

In 1830, MM. Guyot and Admirault published a series of experiments on the seat of taste in man, from which they drew the two following conclusions:

1. The lips, the inner part of the cheeks, the roof of the mouth,

pharynx, velum palati, dorsal and inferior surfaces of the tongue, have no share in the production of taste.

2. The sense of taste exists only at the posterior part of the tongue ; along its edges for about a line or two towards the dorsal surface ; at the point of the tongue ; and, finally, at a restricted point of the velum palati, situate very nearly at the centre of its anterior surface.

In a second memoir, lately published by the same authors, an additional number of experiments has been recorded, together with a solution of the following questions :—

1. Do the gustatory surfaces perceive, with an equal degree of intensity, throughout their whole extent ?—No. Taste is much stronger at the base of the tongue, and along its edges the gustatory power goes on increasing from the pillars of the velum palati up to the tip of the tongue, where it is at a maximum.

2. Do the gustatory surfaces perceive indifferently all kinds of savors ?—Certain bodies, such as milk, butter, oil, and especially alimentary substances, only produce an impression of tact, at the anterior part, their characteristic tastes being only distinguished at the posterior part of the tongue.

3. Does a sapid body produce an identical taste when applied to different regions of the tongue ?—A great number of bodies, and salt in particular, exhibit this very remarkable phenomenon, that the sensations which they produce at the anterior and posterior parts of the tongue are extremely different. Thus, solid acetate of potass, which, at the anterior part of the tongue produces a burning acid sensation, is merely bitter and nauseous when applied to the posterior surface, upon which it produces no acid nor stimulating impression. Sulphate of magnesia, slightly acid and saltish in front, becomes intensely bitter at the root of the tongue. Acetate of lead produces only a sweet taste at the posterior part ; anteriorly it is styptic, fresh, and stimulant. The alkalis, the water of lime, and of ammonia, produce only one taste, no matter where they may be applied.

From the very numerous experiments which M. Guyot has performed, both on himself and on other individuals, he concludes—

1. That taste is a physical and not a chemical sense ; that it is connected with the nature of bodies, and not with their densities, their temperature, or their consistence. In this respect it differs very considerably from the senses of touch or tact, which are exclusively destined to recognize the physical properties of bodies.

2. That the sense of taste must be exercised by at least two nerves.

Numerous anatomical investigations have led M. Guyot to regard the glosso-pharyngeal nerve as the one which presides over the perception of taste at the base of the tongue, and perhaps at the velum palati ; while the lingual nerve, on the contrary, exercises the sense of taste at the point of the organ.

In this point of view the sense of taste, reacting on the glosso-pharyngeal nerve, probably determines the acts of deglutition and regurgitation. By the communications and terminations of this latter it may act simultaneously on the amygdalæ, provoking their secretions ; on the

glosso-staphyl, which aids in closing the glottis and epiglottis, &c., &c. In the same manner the lingual nerve, receiving rapid impressions at the point of the tongue, may provoke contractions in that organ, and, in a word, harmonize and complete the function.—*Gaz. Med. de Paris.*

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, DECEMBER 20, 1837.

INTRODUCTORY AT WILLOUGHBY MEDICAL COLLEGE.*

AN introductory lecture was delivered at the commencement of the present term, at this institution, by R. Granger, Esq., the President, which merits more than an ordinary notice, on account of its intrinsic excellence. Without knowing anything of the circumstances which determined the faculty to fix upon that gentleman to give a preface to the course of instruction about to be opened, we are free to confess that it rarely falls to our lot to meet with better sentiments, more beautifully expressed, than are to be found in this short, though finely written discourse.

He refers to the time when the awful mysteries of religion, medicine, and law, were professed and taught by the same individual, and speaks of the manner in which the Jewish High Priest sought for the evidences of leprosy. Passing with rapidity over astrological and meteorological medicine, to consider the transcendent advantages of scientific chemistry, the author exhibits an acquaintance with the kindred sciences. Botany seems to have been particularly delightful to him as a study, and the fact is discoverable in the expressive eloquence in which the secret is betrayed.

"Were botany and vegetable physiology of no other importance than to discipline the mind to combine the most minute observation with the most expanded views, it would not be useless; nor can it ever be idle in him who makes the highest of organized beings his study and care, to institute comparisons between them and the lowest in the natural scale. What though plants rooted in earth are deprived of the powers of locomotion; they are composed of the same elements with ourselves, with the doubtful exception of azote. Like us they are furnished with the capacity to select each its own peculiar pabulum, with vessels and organs by which it may be elaborated and distributed. Like animals, they slough their useless parts; and, though they may lack a common sensorium, they at least possess excitability. Those who push comparative anatomy and physiology farthest, are compelled to admit that the line between the animal and vegetable kingdoms is so finely drawn as to be scarcely perceptible. If no other motive could induce a physician's attention to botany, it would at least receive some notice from that pride which impels every truly professional man to make every other branch of learning contribute to the support, illustration and advancement of his own cherished science.

* Introductory Lecture delivered at the Willoughby Medical College of the Willoughby University of Lake Erie, 1837-8, by Ralph Granger, Esq., President.

"The wonderful results of organic action are beautifully and readily exhibited by the examination of a single tree. The mathematical rules of combination seem to be set at nought, by the endless variety in which the few elementary principles of vegetables are made to appear. Who shall enumerate their various dyes, odors and flavors, as countless as dissimilar? Study even a peach. Leave out of view the structure of its stem and leaves, with the functions they perform; and look not at the beauty of its blossom. Take the immature fruit, unsavory to the taste, and clad in the common green livery of vegetation—it is fed by the same sap which might have been converted merely to leaves or wood, yet, by the action of its own system of vessels, with no unusual supply of sunshine or of air, it paints its own cheeks with the richest and daily varying tints—it converts its gum to sugar. The crude juices it receives are partly converted into a pulp, and to fluids of a far different character, wholesome, fragrant, and delicious to the taste. Within this, a bony nut, harder than wood itself, in its turn encloses a kernel, in which the blandest of fixed oils is mingled with the most deadly poison known; and all these phenomena are the results of organic action. Yes, and it will be demonstrated that some substances now called simple, even metals, are but the product of this same action on materials as simple. What a study, then, must the principles of organic action ever remain!"

Had the following paragraph been passed over, the opportunity would have been lost of showing the President's readiness in searching into old things, and his knowledge, too, in historical medicine, brought down to this eventful age.

"To the advantages possessed by the student of the present day, from the improvement of all other branches of natural history, may be added those arising from the safe and rapid intercourse between the most distant and dissimilar countries of the globe—and the improved character of those who visit foreign nations. Descriptions of natural objects, as well as of diseases and their treatment, are now given with scientific accuracy. We read no more of those celebrated races, the description of which, on the authority of travellers, renders ancient works on natural history so amusingly absurd. The Blemnegi without heads, with mouth and eyes in the breast—the Himantapodes who crept from incapacity to walk—the Pigmies—the Nisicastes with three or four eyes—the Nigrivæ with a single eye in the forehead; and the Cynamolge with dogs' heads, are none of them now to be found, *adult*, in Ethiopia, though gravely described by ancient authors. Yet to know what the ancients believed, is not to be despised by a physician. Mingled in a mass of absurdities, are some notions uncontradicted, and worthy of consideration. Take, as an example, the following sentence from Pliny. '*A pestilence beginning in the south parts, goeth always to the west.*' That the smallpox originated in southern China or Hindostan, and pursued the path suggested by Pliny, has long been matter of history.

"From travellers we are beginning to trace the destructive progress of a disease, with as much geographical precision, as the devastating march of an army is delineated. Since this present century commenced, the typhus gravior, and the Asiatic cholera, each once, and a fatal influenza twice, have been epidemic; and it is a wonderful fact, that they have all commenced in the southern parts of Asia, and travelled westward, as disease must often have done before Pliny would have obtained the notion."

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"It is not for mere curiosity, or to lay by a stock of idle learning, that it is recommended to study the general history of diseases, in connection with the physical structure of the country, and the peculiarities of the climate, and of the habits of the people, where each most prevails; for, in all new forms of disease, the most experienced practitioner, however well he may be satisfied by the indications of the symptoms, of the course probably the best to be pursued, still knows that the first prescriptions can be little else than experiments, unless led to them by analogies drawn from known facts, and not from simple dogmas. As in law, one presumption may be founded on a fact, but one presumption is not allowed to rest on another; so in medicine, one theory may be constructed upon facts, but never upon another theory. An extensive knowledge of facts is therefore of great importance in the treatment of those cases where no direct precedent for practice is given, and where the method of cure must be devised by induction."

Here is a volume of common-sense philosophy compressed into a nutshell, which we cordially wish might be both circulated and appreciated.

"The customs of a country have more influence upon the general state of health, and the practice of medicine, than is usually supposed. It is comparatively easy to acquire a thorough knowledge of the general manner in which health is preserved in other regions, without being able to make that knowledge useful in any eminent degree, where customs differ. With us the skin receives no attention, until it actually becomes diseased. But dry hot baths, or steam baths, with shampooing, friction or flagellation, are used as a preventive of disease, over more than half the globe. In the islands of the Pacific and the South Sea, the nations use cold bathing before meals, and after their meals are shampooed in the manner sometimes practised on dyspeptics. In Sweden, Finland, Russia and Tartary, they bathe habitually in vapor generated by throwing water upon heated stones, in apartments constructed for the purpose; and are lashed with twigs during the operation. The North American savages, not habitually, but for sickness only, bathe in steam raised in the same manner; but instead of flagellation, pursue the more primitive mode of employing the incantations of a priest during the ceremony. The more luxurious orientals use suits of rooms, heated without vapor; where, after friction, various unguents are applied to the whole surface. Such was once the practice of the Romans; but it is a singular fact, that, for some unexplained reason, practices so ancient, and once universal, are now generally discontinued in all civilized portions of christendom, though of undoubted benefit to health."

The following quotations will be read with interest.

"That the disposition to generalize diseases, and simplify their treatment, without reference to individual or local peculiarities, should in an equal degree lessen the number of remedies employed, is not only a necessary consequence, but, if not carried too far, is a grand desideratum. A catalogue of ancient medicines is by no means the least amusing and curious branch of the study of medicine. One who reads the recipes given, even by Lord Verulam, would scarcely imagine him to have been the father of the only correct method of reasoning for discovery—the inductive method. If the value of a prescription depend on its costliness or rarity, a solution of pearls or aurum portabile would have been choice medicines; but the days of Mithridate and Bezoar, of Mummy and Ambergris, of gold and pearls, have departed. Though

after the example of Medea, the transfusion of blood and the injection of medical solutions into the bloodvessels may have been resorted to in modern times ; it can be said with pride, that the contents of Medea's cauldron find no rivals in regular practice, though the '*mille aliis postquam sine nomine rebus*' may long find admirers among the vulgar."

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"This age looks favorably upon all attempts at improvement in science generally. That there never has been, that there never will be, any want of favor to the medical profession, is sufficiently evinced by the confidence still reposed in unscientific pretenders. The truly learned feels no chagrin at this want of discrimination in others. He knows that those who run after nostrums would, in other countries, with the same blind faith and ignorance, make pilgrimages to kiss consecrated relics. He knows, also, that though occasionally an old prejudice against one mode of practice or another, against one class of remedies or another, is revived, and obtains an ephemeral popularity ; that still the march of public confidence in learning is steadily onward, and exactly in proportion as the mass of community itself becomes enlightened. Sustained by this knowledge, and the delightful consciousness of doing good, and (for the whole world is not ungrateful), occasionally cheered by the tearful gratitude of those whose pains he has alleviated, whose sorrows he has soothed, and perhaps whose lives he has been instrumental in saving, he learns to treat with indifference the vexations and inconveniences with which his path is strewn."

If the corporation give this lecture a liberal circulation, it will do more for the reputation of the Willoughby Medical College than any official measure they can adopt. People delight to honor those to whom honor is due.

Mammoth Magnet.—Dr. William King, electrician, at No. 52 Cornhill, Boston, has nearly completed the largest electro-magnet, probably, in the world. It is made of a bar of iron two and a half inches in diameter, thirteen and a half feet long, bent into the horse-shoe form, and weighs *two hundred and forty-four pounds*. The armative, or keeper, weighs twenty-eight pounds, thrown into the segment of a small circle, in order to meet the two poles of the magnet, which are only seven inches apart. Seven hundred feet of copper wire, one sixteenth of an inch in diameter ; and ten thousand feet, one fortieth of an inch, are wound round the bar, from one extremity to the other. It is impossible, at present, to determine its power, the frame on which it is to rest not yet being finished.

We are persuaded that this will be the most magnificent philosophical instrument ever constructed in America, or, perhaps, in any other country, if successfully charged. Gentlemen, curious in these matters, would derive much satisfaction from an inspection of this extraordinary piece of workmanship, which should be secured, at once, by some of our colleges. Dr. King is an aged man, and would hardly be willing to undertake the manufacture of another of such gigantic proportions.

Thomsonian Conventions.—If half the effort were made by scientific practitioners of medicine throughout the United States, to elevate the profession, that is exerted by those speculating adventurers in the heal-

ing art, who have neither science or literature to recommend them, there would hardly be a single quack from Maine to Georgia. The Thomsons are busily organizing, holding annual conventions, publishing circulars, issuing pamphlets and circulating their successes, and evince a determination to make the world know they are in being, whether any one employs them or not. One of their periodicals, which has an extensive circulation, contains double the number of original reported cases which are found in our pages. But the course they are pursuing is admirable, for it tends to improve them individually; yet unless a counteracting influence is put in motion, there is reason to fear that in the interior of the country they will eventually become the dominant party.

Berkshire Medical Institution Commencement.—The first annual commencement of this institution, under the act of incorporation of April, 1837, took place in Pittsfield on Wednesday, 29th Nov.

The exercises of the day began with the reading of the Inaugural Theses. At 12 o'clock an address was delivered by Dr. Bartlett, on the relative improvement of the sciences and of the human race, and on the influence of the former in ameliorating the condition of the latter. After which the degree of M.D. was conferred upon 21 gentlemen.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred upon the following gentlemen: Samuel B. Barlow, Florida, Orange County, N. Y. James W. Smith, Rochester, N. Y. Nathaniel Smith, Bennington, Vt. The ceremonies were concluded with an appropriate address to the graduates by Dr. Childs.

At a meeting of the Trustees of the institution, held on the 29th Aug., 1837, the degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred upon 8 gentlemen.

Medical Miscellany.—Dr. Hart, of New York, has recovered damages of Wood, the singer, to the amount of \$3000, for spitting in his face. This is more than he would have earned in four years, as a reporter to a paper, having abandoned the practice of his profession.—Dr. J. R. Burden has been elected Speaker of the Senate of Pennsylvania.—The city of Boston has contributed \$454,400 to the Massachusetts General Hospital, since its first establishment.—Twelve thousand francs are offered by the government of Lower Canada, for the arrest of Dr. Wolfred Nelson, a patriot.—The number of surgeons in the U. S. Navy has been increased, the past year, from forty-four to fifty, which is not more than half enough.—The cholera had again made its appearance in the Provinces of St. Salvador and Gautamala, Central America, and had been marked with unusual fatality, but on the 1st. of October was declining. In the Provinces of Nicaragua and Honduras, it has made dreadful havoc.—The smallpox has broken out in Eastport, Me.—Dr. Ruschenberger, fleet surgeon in the Peacock, has in press at Philadelphia, the voyage of that vessel round the world.—Dr. Morrison, of Toronto, was taken prisoner by the royalists, in the late tumult in the capital of Upper Canada.—Dr. C. Ticknor, of New York, author of "The Philosophy of Living," has in press a volume of three hundred pages, entitled, "A Popular Treatise on Medical Philosophy, or an exposition of quackery and imposture in medicine."

DIED.—At Philadelphia, Dr. Philip Syng Physic, aged 70, long distinguished for being the first surgeon in America.—At Paris, Dr. D. Franklin Holmes, of Philadelphia.—At Sterling, Geo., Dr. Francis E. K. Miller, aged 24.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—A history of the Smallpox in Lowell, and a paper on *Lobelia inflata*, are on file for next week.

Whole number of deaths in Boston, for the week ending Dec. 16, 29. Males, 14—Females, 15.

Consumption, 8—convulsions, 1—typhus fever, 2—scarlatina, 1—diphtheria, 1—inflammation of the brain, 1—apoplexy, 2—disease of the heart, 2—inflammation of the lungs, 1—intemperance, 1—teething, 1—child-bed, 1—old age, 1—infantile, 1—fits, 1—stillborn, 1.

MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

The subscribers are associated for the purpose of giving a complete course of medical instruction, and will receive pupils on the following terms:

The pupils will be admitted to the practice of the Massachusetts General Hospital, and will receive clinical lectures on the cases they witness there. Instruction, by lectures or examinations, will be given in the intervals of the public lectures, every week day.

On Midwifery, and the Diseases of Women and Children, and on Chemistry, by DR. CHANNING.
On Physiology, Pathology, Therapeutics, and Materia Medica, " DR. WARE.
On the Principles and Practice of Surgery, " DR. OTIS.
On Anatomy, " DR. LEWIS.

The students are provided with a room in Dr. Lewis's house, where they have access to a large library. Lights and fuel without any charge. The opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of Anatomy are not inferior to any in the country.

The fees are \$100—to be paid in advance. No credit given, except on sufficient security of some person in Boston, nor for a longer period than six months.

Applications are to be made to Dr. Walter Channing, Tremont Street, opposite the Tremont House, Boston.

WALTER CHANNING,
JOHN WARE,
GEORGE W. OTIS, JR.,
WINSLOW LEWIS, JR.

Oct. 18—tf

VACCINE VIRUS.

PHYSICIANS in any section of the United States can procure ten quills charged with PURE VACCINE VIRUS by return mail, on addressing the editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, enclosing one dollar, *post paid*, without which, no letter will be taken from the post office. Oct. 25.

MEDICAL SCHOOL OF MAINE.

THE Medical Lectures at Bowdoin College will commence on Monday, the 19th of February, 1838.

Anatomy and Surgery, by JOSEPH ROSE, M.D., late Demonstrator of Anatomy in the Medical School of Harvard University.

Theory and Practice of Physic, Obstetrics and Medical Jurisprudence, by JAMES M'KEEN, M.D.
Chemistry and Materia Medica, by PARKER CLEVELAND, M.D.

The Anatomical Cabinet and the Library are annually increasing.

Every person, becoming a member of this institution, is required previously to present satisfactory evidence of possessing a good moral character.

The amount of fees for the lectures is \$50. The lectures continue three months.

Degrees are conferred at the close of the lecture term in May, and at the following Commencement of the College in September.

Professor M'KEEN, who has been absent during the last year, visiting the hospitals of Great Britain and France, will return to this country before the commencement of the lectures.

P. CLEVELAND, Secretary.

Brunswick, Oct. 1837.

Nov. 8—copdt

MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

THE subscribers have associated for the purpose of giving medical instruction. A convenient room has been provided for this purpose, which will be open to the students at all hours. They will have access to an extensive medical library, and every other necessary facility for the acquirement of a thorough medical education.

Opportunities will be offered for the observation of diseases and their treatment in two Dispensary districts, embracing Wards 1, 2 and 3, and in cases which will be treated at the room daily.

Instruction will be given by clinical and other lectures, and by examinations at least twice a week.

Sufficient attention will be paid to Practical Anatomy.

For further information, application may be made at the room, over 103 Hanover street, or to the subscribers.

EPHRAIM BUCK, M.D.
ASA B. SNOW, M.D.
E. WALTER LEACH, M.D.
HENRY G. CLARK, M.D.
JOSEPH MORIARTY, M.D.

Boston, August 9, 1837.

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